

closest focus distance and largest zoom magnification. This resulted in the body length seen on the Laptop 15" TFT screen measuring 160 mm, this representing the full uncropped frame at a magnification of thirteen times lifesize. The zoom tool can then be used to magnify the image by a further factor of two or three times for critical detail scrutiny. This is all done under restful viewing conditions and convenient adjacency of reference keys, diagrams and textbooks. Images of any particularly interesting features thus revealed can then be saved with a few clicks of a 'mouse', and subsequently sent for assessment to a specialist via an e-mail attachment.

REFERENCE

- Taylor, M. J. 2001. The development of a practical technique for achieving realistic photographic images of set insect specimens. *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*, **14**: 195–206.

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Status of *Paysandisia archon* (Burmeister) (Lepidoptera: Castniidae) in southern Europe.—It was interesting to read that this South American species, recently introduced to Europe was noted in southern England during 2002 (see *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.*, **16**: 2003). This insect was introduced into Europe, it is thought in about 1995, by a palm importer at Anglès near Girona in the province of Cataluña, Spain. It is the practice of such importers to bring in mature palms; demand cannot at present be met by growing from seed alone. The preferred foodplants of *P. archon*, *Trithrinax campestris*, the Blue Needle Palm and *Butia yatay*, the Yatay palm, are particularly slow growing in any event. Now, several years later, the insect is well established around Girona and also on the French Mediterranean coast between Toulon and Hyères in the département of the Var (83). It is thought also to have gained a foothold in Italy, though there is no confirmation of this at present. The insect is not just attacking its preferred foodplant, but any palms. Even mature specimens can be killed by infestations. Palms of course have been planted extensively around the Mediterranean coast so it is not short of potential hosts. Spain, too, has an indigenous palm, *Chamaerops humilis*, the Mediterranean Fan Palm, which is attacked.

It was said that the specimen found in southern England was a migrant, but this is unlikely. This insect does not seem to have moved, up to now that is, very far from its point of introduction. Although it has killed every Chusan Palm, *Trachycarpus fortunei*, within a 2 km radius of Girona. The Chusan Palm and many hardy palms are planted and survive quite severe winters well inland, but there have been no other sightings so far other than in the two localities mentioned.

Incidentally, interest in *P. archon* has led to the discovery of another introduction here in southern France, the pyralid *Pseudarenipses insularum* Speidel & Schmitz. The Banana Moth, *Opogona sacchari* Bojer (Tineidae) is also well known by growers. The latter is well established in greenhouses at Sieuras in the département of the Ariège (09) not far from my home.—T. HOLLINGWORTH, 6, impasse Frédéric Chopin, F-31700 Blagnac.